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A

MEMORIAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE REQUEST OF THE
CITY COUNCIL OF BOSTON

AT THE

INSTALLATION OF A BRONZE STATUE

OF

ADMIRAL FARRAGUT

IN THE MARINE PARK

JUNE 28, 1893

BY

ALEXANDER H. RICE

FORMERLY CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE ON NAVAL AFFAIRS OF THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES

BOSTON
PRESS OF ROCKWELL AND CHURCHILL
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A MEMORIAL ADDRESS.

THERE is no demonstration to which the heart responds more promptly and completely than to an exhibition of lofty and self-forgetful patriotism. It is this fact which gives significance to all memorial emblems, whether they be institutions, monuments, statues, or tablets; for they each and all seek to perpetuate deeds and the quality of lives which have won the admiration of mankind.

We realize this in the efforts made to keep alive by private and specific emblems the affectionate memory and example of our departed relatives and friends, to whom we fondly atribute most of the virtues; but there is also a generic quality in the tribute to patriotism when the universal public concentrates its admiration upon an ideal, more or less frequently represented by an individual example, worthy of the emulation of all men. Indeed, it is this ideal — the measure of a character lying behind all action — as well as the deeds themselves which we seek to commemorate.

This endowment appears to be inherent in human nature; and hence among all nations and in all periods of time we find monuments commemorative of those esteemed to be wise, or good, or heroic; which monuments are at one and the same time evidences of the grandeur of genuine manhood, and the authoritative teachers of all subsequent generations.

It is not enough that the description of great lives and of their achievements be embodied in the literature of a people; for all do not read, especially do not have the leisure of the library and the scholar, nor even the enchanting literary opportunities of the fireside and home; we must, therefore, have palpable objects in monuments, statues, and tablets which shall represent the heroic qualities of men, and must place these in conspicuous places where they shall be seen by the public, and where their imagery, like the sunshine in nature, shall cause the minds of all beholders to become fruitful in desire and effort to go and do likewise. What would life be without its great examples? And how empty the world without the remembrance of its great artificers and heroes! How tiresome and shallow would history be without the story of the benefactors of mankind!

We come, therefore, to-day, to set up another memorial to the greatest naval hero of modern times; not in the hope to enhance but to perpetuate the fame of Admiral Farragut, and to show that this is a community that can rightly appreciate the nobility of his character and the valor of his deeds.

In contemplating a great character we are wont to seek the germs of greatness in inheritance; and we sometimes look in far-off generations for some individual of a lineage whose magnificent characteristics are newly born, perhaps with superior lustre, in his successor. While the ancestry of Admiral Farragut appears to have been illustrious in individuals of civil, military, and priestly celebrity, yet, with the exception of the renowned Don Pedro Farragut, who served under James I., King of Aragon, in 1229, in the campaigns which resulted in the expulsion of the Moors

from Majorca, and from Valencia in 1238, if there be any adventurous spirit like the great Admiral himself, the horizon of history closes down before we are able to identify him in the constellation of glories to which he immediately belonged. About all else of special interest that we know of the family is that the Admiral's father was born in the Island of Minorca in the Mediterranean Sea, Sept. 29, 1755, and that he was not of that Anglo-Saxon race for which we are accustomed to claim almost everything worthy of commemoration, but that he was of pure Spanish blood, which in these Columbian days may justly claim a respectable share in the line of maritime exploits, as well as in the traditionary development of good fighting qualities. At the time of Farragut's father's birth, however, the island of Minorca was under the British flag, having been ceded to the British Crown by the Treaty of Utrecht, in 1713. In March, 1776, when twenty-one years old, having long before severed his connection with his native country, George Farragut, the Admiral's father, emigrated to North America, then in the early struggles of the Revolutionary War, immediately espoused the cause of the colonists and served gallantly during the entire conflict. At the close of the Revolutionary War, in the search of his own fortune and the welfare of his family, he followed the adventurous spirit of those days to the borders of civilization, then at the meeting-place of North Carolina and Tennessee, where he settled and married a lady, native of Dobbs County, in the former State. She appears to have been a woman of excellent natural endowments, possessing withal the courage and fortitude necessary to meet bravely with her household the dangerous necessities of a frontier neighborhood. It was here, in East Tennessee, at Campbell's Station,

near the present city of Knoxville, that David Glasgow Farragut, whom this splendid statue seeks to commemorate, was born on July 5, 1801; about as near to July 4th, you will observe, as he could get without trenching upon the great national holiday in that year. Shortly after the birth of this son, the Farragut family removed to Louisiana and settled by the borders of Lake Pontchartrain.

If the early biography of Admiral Farragut be limited and simple (and so far as I know, outside of public documents, it is chiefly embodied in a volume written by his son, Mr. Loyall Farragut, of New York, and in another by Captain A. T. Mahan, U.S.N., from each of which I have drawn liberally in the preparation of this address), if, I say, it be limited and simple, it is also singularly picturesque, romantic, and providential; indeed, from first to last, his career appears to have been guided and directed by an inscrutable Providence, which led his associates and followers to say so often that he had a "charmed life."

What, for example, could possibly seem more providential than the incident which occurred upon the lake by which they lived in Louisiana, when Farragut was a boy scarcely eight years old, and yet which opened the way and shaped it for that wonderful career which has given world-wide celebrity to his name? We are told that one day while his father was out fishing on the lake he casually fell in with another fisherman who was prostrated in his boat by the heat, whom he took to his own house and nursed and cared for until he died. This sufferer proved to be David Porter, the father of Capt. David Porter, the noble commander of the frigate "Essex," of reputable fame, and grandfather of Admiral David D. Porter, who succeeded Admiral Farragut in

the highest naval rank in this country, largely because of his distinguished achievements in the War of the Rebellion. The Porters were bound in lasting gratitude to the Farraguts for their kindness to the suffering fisherman; and as Mrs. Farragut, the Admiral's mother, died at about the same time as Mr. Porter, the two were buried on the same day, thus cementing in the sacred solemnities of death the providential incident which initiated their acquaintance.

Previous to the incidents just stated, young Farragut's father had received a sailing-master's commission in the navy and commanded a gunboat, so that his active services were frequently required in allaying disturbances during the dispute concerning boundaries then existing between the United States and the Spanish Government, to which latter Florida then belonged. The boy Farragut appears to have been the special recipient of the kindness and grateful offices of Captain Porter, who took him into his special care, placed him at school at Chester, Pa., and afterwards took him as his charge and companion on board the vessels which he commanded. Farragut thus obtained a midshipman's commission before he was nine years old, which case probably has no parallel in the history of the American Navy. He was ten years and one month old only when he joined the "Essex," a brave, self-reliant, adventurous, but dutiful boy, afterwards eminently fit to command, because early accustomed to obey. The "Essex" was built at Salem, Mass., and paid for by the patriotic contributions of the citizens of that place. Captain Porter took command of her in August, 1811, young Farragut being with him, and the frigate was then lying at Norfolk, Va. On the 18th of June, 1812, only about eleven months afterwards, the Congress of

the United States declared war against Great Britain, and this declaration was read to the crew of the "Essex" on three successive days, so that no British subject on board, if there chanced to be one, should be required to serve against his flag. There being none who were not liable to duty, the "Essex" sailed for her memorable cruise in the Pacific Ocean. She was the first American man-of-war to pass around Cape Horn, as she had been the first to double the Cape of Good Hope, and her experience was a rough one, but it was followed by a series of almost uninterrupted successes and victories, until she finally encountered the British frigate "Phœbe" and the British sloop-of-war "Cherub," early in February, 1814, off Valparaiso, Chili. A combined attack was made upon her by these two vessels while half the men belonging to the "Essex" were on shore; but upon a signal being given, the men were all aboard the "Essex" in fifteen minutes, and all but one prepared for duty. After one of the most desperate battles ever fought upon the ocean, under the adverse conditions of contending with two vessels of the enemy of greatly superior force, herself disabled by a furious storm, all her officers but one killed, and the "Essex" on fire, she surrendered in a defeat, like that on land at Bunker Hill, which was more glorious than the victory. The commander of the British forces, Capt. Hillyard, was wounded, and died before the engagement ended.

In his note-book young Farragut says: "During the action I performed the duties of captain's aid, quarter-gunner, powder-boy, and in fact did everything that was required of me. I shall never forget the horrid impression made upon me at the sight of the first man I had ever seen killed. He was a boatswain's mate and was fearfully mutilated. It staggered and sick-

ened me at first; but they soon began to fall around me so fast that it all appeared to me like a dream, and produced no effect upon my nerves." "I can remember well," he continues, "while I was standing near the captain, just abaft the mainmast, a shot came through the waterways and glanced upward, killing four men who were standing beside the gun, taking the last one in the head and scattering his brains over both of us. But this awful sight did not affect me half as much as the death of the first poor fellow. I neither thought of nor noticed anything but the working of the guns."

Such was the literal baptism by fire and blood of the young midshipman and future Admiral, as if fate, or that Divine Providence which he always reverently recognized, intended thus signally to forecast his illustrious destiny.

Later on in his journal young Farragut wrote: "After the battle had ceased, when, on going below I saw the mangled bodies of my shipmates, dead and dying, groaning and expiring with the most patriotic sentiments on their lips, I became faint and sick; my sympathies were all aroused; among the badly wounded was one of my best friends, Lieut. Cowell. When I spoke to him he said, 'Oh Davy, I fear it is all up with me;' but when it was proposed to drop another patient and attend to him, he replied, 'No, doctor, none of that; fair play is a jewel. One man's life is as good as another's; I would not cheat any poor fellow out of his turn.' Thus died," continues the journal, "one of the best and bravest men among us."

After this momentous battle, Porter and his surviving officers and crew were sent to New York under parole, himself receiving an enthusiastic ovation from the

people, who took the horses from his carriage and drew it themselves through the streets of the city. Young Farragut was again placed at school at Chester, Pa., where there were some innovations upon the customary methods of teaching, but in which we now recognize some of the most approved elements of modern study, by lectures and object-lessons. It has sometimes been a matter of surprise that a lad taken away from the early opportunities for schooling, and entering the Government service at so early an age, could have acquired so much in the way of literary accomplishments as Farragut's writings and career show that he really did accomplish. It must be borne in mind, in this connection, that Captain Porter was his faithful and almost paternal guardian; and that when young Farragut was not at school at Chester, he was under instruction of the chaplains of the fleet to which he was at the time attached and in companionable intercourse with officers who were men of polite and respectable cultivation, as naval officers generally are. Thus the cabin became in a great degree the University, in which young Farragut enlarged his sphere of knowledge and strengthened those natural intellectual powers which supplemented his passionate devotion to the honor and welfare of his country. It was, moreover, evident from the first with respect to him, as Wordsworth says, that

"The child is father of the man."

And again we might afterwards apply to Farragut Shakespeare's immortal definition, and say,

"The elements so mixed in him that nature might stand up and say to all the world, This was a man."

During the year following the arrival of the "Essex" in New York, he was paroled, and thus enabled to return to active service. Farragut was connected with several different vessels in cruises at home and in foreign seas, and was abroad for four years, during a portion of which time he was under the instruction of Mr. Charles Folsom, of Cambridge, Mass., then our consul at Tunis, in Africa, where he studied mathematics, English Literature, French and Italian, and made personal investigation of the ancient civilization established at Carthage and vicinity during the period of the great Roman Empire. He had a special aptitude for languages and spoke several modern tongues with ease and fluency. After his return to the United States in 1820 he passed a successful examination and was promoted from the rank of midshipman to lieutenant in the navy.

In February, 1823, Farragut joined the Mosquito fleet under Capt. Porter, to exterminate the pirates which infested the Caribbean Sea, and was eminently successful in that his last official connection with his life-long mentor and benefactor. It will thus be seen how extraordinary were the opportunities, and how exceptional the instruction and discipline that young Farragut received for discharging the highest duties and assuming the weightiest responsibilities of the naval service. Illustrious as were the services of Capt. Porter all through his honorable and brilliant career, could all secrets be revealed, it would be found, perhaps, that all his other achievements were excelled by his training of the youth who was destined to be the greatest naval officer of modern times, and to make a fame for himself and for his country that has penetrated to the remotest corners of the earth.

From this time (namely, the cruise of the Mosquito fleet) till the beginning of the War of the Rebellion, the experience of Farragut was, for the most part, we are told, that of naval officers in general in time of peace, except that he improved every opportunity of study, observation, or experience to more completely qualify himself for the highest duties of his profession; as if the great future which ultimately opened to him had already been revealed. During this period he cruised in foreign seas, did bureau and commission duty at home, attended lectures at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, etc.

We have noticed that in the earliest part of his career, and during his first fighting experience on the "Essex," while covered with blood himself, and standing where men were falling all around him, he says, "I neither thought of nor noticed anything but the working of the guns." That might appropriately be taken as his motto: he always *had his eye on the guns;* and nothing, not even the terrible rage of battle, could so confuse him as to distract his attention from the legitimate duties of his profession. He carefully studied "the working of the guns," and every change in the naval equipment, experimental or permanent, the movements of every battle, the effects of any conflict upon different kinds of defences, and whatever could contribute to his stock of naval knowledge.

During the period between the expedition of the Mosquito fleet and the breaking out of the Civil War, Farragut was promoted first to the rank of commander, and then of captain in the navy; which latter rank he held when the Rebellion broke out.

The occurrence of the Civil War was one of the

most momentous events in the history of the world. Upon its issues hung not only the hopes of liberty and the fate of republican governments throughout the world, but there was no government nor people who would not have felt its influence in some modifying particular, if the American Union had been destroyed. This country was too large and its influence and example too powerful to allow these issues to be pent up within its own borders. This was seen by sagacious statesmen throughout the world; and hence the declaration at a critical moment by Prince Gortschakoff, the Prime Minister of Russia, that "the preservation of the American Union was essential to the peace of the world," produced a significant effect upon France and England when they were manifesting some hesitancy as to the direction in which their sympathies should be thrown.

Although the contest was to be a domestic one, — a war between contending States, — yet as the country was ocean bound, and linked in close commercial relations with other maritime powers, it was evident from the beginning that a powerful navy would be required for defence, if not for conquest. Perhaps no nation was ever less prepared for a great naval test. The warships were few in number, though some were of good pattern and equipment for that day — a strong contrast to this day, when modern American cruisers fully equipped make more than eighty miles in four hours.

The Secretary of the Navy, in his report submitted to the President, July 4, 1861, says of the size of the navy:

"Excluding vessels on the stocks, those unfinished, those used as stationary storeships and receiving-ships,

and those considered inexpedient to repair, the available force of the navy is sixty-nine vessels." Of this force forty-two were in commission (as it was termed), and of the twelve belonging to the Home squadron, only four small vessels, carrying twenty-five guns and about two hundred and eighty men, were in Northern ports. And again, in his report five months later; namely, Dec. 2, 1861, the Secretary said, "The Home squadron consisted of twelve vessels, and of these only four were in Northern ports and available for service." The remaining vessels of the Home squadron were in Southern waters, and the other ships, not of the Home squadron, were in the Mediterranean, off the coast of Brazil, the coast of Africa, and in the East Indies. What an insignificant force were these four small vessels with which to undertake a gigantic war involving as one item the blockade of three thousand miles of sea-coast and more than thirty-five hundred miles of river navigation!

There were, as the Secretary says, only four small vessels ready for immediate service; nearly one-half of our navy-yards were in hostile territory; and to them had been transferred in advance a large portion of the ordnance and stores fit for use. Many of the officers, especially those of Southern birth, had decided to "go with their State," as it was termed, or were hesitating in their decision, and the loyal people of the country had no realization that we were actually entering upon a bloody and protracted war. The Government at Washington, however, did realize the fact, and the wisest counsellors were at their wits' end to solve the problem of successfully dealing with so grave a matter. Meanwhile, diplomatic uneasiness was increasing, and the difficulty of preserving equilibrium with other

nations was all the time growing more imminent; and the half-fear, half-impatience of our people at the supposed delay of effective action by our own Government was daily becoming more formidable. At this juncture, the Secretary of the Navy bought a hundred or more merchant vessels with the purpose of altering them so as to carry batteries, and otherwise fit them for naval service. These were distributed among private shipyards, as well as the still loyal navy-yards; and the new activity seemed for a time to allay the public complaint and anxiety, but did not extinguish either. All remember the much criticised remark of Mr. Seward, about this time, that "the whole disturbance would be over in ninety days," or words to that effect. Some persons, then and since, have supposed that Mr. Seward was mistaken in his estimate, but, if there was any one man of that administration besides President Lincoln who correctly understood the situation of affairs, that man was William H. Seward, the Secretary of State. Mr. Seward's statement, therefore, must be regarded as purely a diplomatic utterance; in which he perilled his own reputation for sagacity for the triple purpose of quieting foreign powers, composing our own people, and gaining time for the Secretary of the Navy to successfully accomplish his work. It was rumored in official circles, at that time, in Washington, that Secretary Welles was, after all, obliged privately to ask the shipyards not to hurry the alterations of the merchant vessels, because he had no guns to equip them with if immediately finished; and thus the last dilemma might be worse than the first.

A still further embarrassment arose from the fact that the higher offices of the navy were then filled with respectable gentlemen, some of education, fortune,

political influence, and eminent social position, yet manifestly unfit for such commands as their rank entitled them to, if ordered into actual war service. No personal objection could be made to these gentlemen, and it was the desire of the Government to shield them from every possible indication of its disrespect. It was absolutely necessary, however, that most of these men should be retired, or their places upon the active list be made vacant, which was substantially the same thing; but how this could be done without wounding the sensibilities of the officers affected, or their friends, was an embarrassing problem, and although its solution was attempted with the most absolute fairness both in legislative and executive departments, it was practically impossible to avoid all heart-burnings and complaints in its accomplishment.

Upon his decision to abide with the North, or with the Union, after the passage of the ordinance of secession by the Virginia Convention, Farragut went directly to New York and took up his residence at Hastings, on the Hudson River, and there waited results. From Hastings he was called to Washington "to assist the Navy Department in the delicate but necessary discrimination to be made between the competent officers and those disabled by age or other infirmity." Probably no duty more distasteful to his generous and warm-hearted nature could have been assigned to him, especially as he had not wholly escaped criticism himself on the score of bias or prejudice arising from his birthplace and associations. This criticism, however, had no effect whatever upon himself, and very little upon the public mind; therefore, he assumed without hesitation the unwelcome duty, supported substantially by the universal confidence of the Government and of the country.

A little later on I well remember the anxiety which pervaded the Navy Department when the expedition against New Orleans was projected. It was felt that an officer of large experience, thorough loyalty, and fruitful in expedients for such emergencies as might arise in an undertaking so novel and so dangerous was indispensable as a leader. Rear Admiral Joseph Smith, the veteran chief of the Bureau of Yards and Docks, and Mr. Gustavus V. Fox, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, were warm advocates of Captain Farragut, and he was finally selected with entire unanimity by all concerned. It is not necessary to Admiral Farragut's reputation to claim that he originated the plan of the expedition to New Orleans and the bold and chivalrous idea of passing the two forts of Jackson and St. Philip which guarded the approaches to the city on either side of the river. The credit of the conception of the idea and of substantially maturing the plan adopted by the Department for its execution belong to Mr. Fox, the Assistant Secretary of the Navy; but the point which immediately concerns us now is that Farragut was selected for its achievement, because he was believed to be the best officer of eligible rank to whom the expedition could be intrusted. Farragut was delighted both with this evidence of the confidence of the Government in his ability and loyalty, and in the rare opportunity the appointment would afford to serve his country.

Of the two forts, Jackson on the right bank of the Mississippi and St. Philip on the left bank, Jackson was much the stronger, and is described as "a casemated brick structure, pentagonal in form, carrying *en barbette* over the casemates twenty-seven cannon of and above the size of thirty-two pounders, besides eleven

twenty-four pounders. In the casemates were fourteen twenty-four pounders." Fort St. Philip was nearly opposite and so placed as not only to command the river in front but to sweep any approaching vessels in the stream. "It comprised the fort proper and two water batteries, which together mounted forty-two guns." "The sites of these fortifications," says Captain Mahan, "had been skilfully chosen, but their armaments, though formidable and greatly superior to those of the fleet, were not equal to the demands of the occasion." In addition to the forts the Confederates constructed a barrier across the river, just below the forts and under their fire, consisting of the hulks of eight schooners bound together by iron cables and held by anchors to their places in the stream. The object being, of course, to obstruct the passage of the Union squadron, and to hold it possibly under the fire of the forts, if an attempt to pass were made. The Confederates also had another flotilla of obstructions farther up the river, and above Fort St. Philip; so that, in case the Union squadron should by possibility pass the lower obstruction, it would encounter the second in a spot where it would be directly under the fire of both forts.

The fleet of Farragut consisted of nineteen ships, divided into three divisions; the first division consisting of eight, the second of three, and the third of eight, including Commander Porter's, gunboats, which are here counted as one. The leader of the second or centre division was the "Hartford," Farragut's flag-ship. The original idea seems to have been that Porter's mortar fleet would reduce the forts, and that then the other vessels would pass up the river and take possession of the city; and the instructions from the Navy Department rather favored this idea, or at least were

sufficiently indefinite to allow of that interpretation. It may be here remarked that the prevailing idea, both in the Confederate councils and in those of the Union, was that if New Orleans was to be attacked at all, it would be, perhaps must be, from the North rather than from the sea; and it was thought that the difficulty of passing the bar at the mouth of the river with large vessels, the two forts and the flotillas afforded ample protection from attack from the latter direction.

This idea was current until the time of Mr. Fox's conception of the attack committed to Farragut's execution. While the larger vessels were being dragged over the bar, therefore, Porter's mortar fleet entered the river and proceeded to attach the forts. After six days of bombardment, during which the guns of the fleet were worked with great precision, very little damage was done to the forts. Two of the gunboats, the "Itaska" and the "Pinola," were sent upon the daring and dangerous duty of destroying the flotilla hulks chained across the river and, as has been said, within range of the forts. After various unsuccessful and perilous attempts to break the cables with which the flotilla was chained, the "Itaska," by a most daring rush against them, broke the cables and made an available breach in the line. In the meantime, Farragut saw that the reduction of the forts by the mortar fleet was practically impossible; and a less daring and courageous spirit than his might have given up further attempts to reach New Orleans and still keep within the letter of his instructions; but he was a man as fertile in expedients as he was indomitable in courage, and after much meditation and consultation, he determined, even against high and authoritative opinion, to attempt to run the fleet past the forts before the latter

had been reduced by the mortar boats; he accordingly gave orders in detail for this adventurous effort, at the same time giving notice that further particulars would be given from time to time, by signal, as circumstances might develop their necessity. "It was the prelude to a drama of singular energy and grandeur, for the Confederates in their forts were fully on guard and had anticipated with unshaken courage, but with gloomy forebodings, an attack during that very night." "There will be no to-morrow for New Orleans," said the undaunted commander of Fort Jackson, the day before, "if the [Confederate] navy does not at once move the 'Louisiana' to the position assigned to her close to the obstructions." The "Louisiana" was a powerful Confederate iron-clad battery not quite completed when Farragut entered the river. The order to prepare for the attack was given, and the ships were put in order as quickly as possible; the rigging was reduced as far as practicable, the wooden sides of the vessels were protected by chains run fore and aft over the portions outside the engines and boilers, and at last all was ready, both officers and crews meanwhile holding their breath in suspense of expectation. The passage of the forts was a spectacle and an experience which baffles alike the efforts of the pen to describe or the imagination to conceive. The darkness of the night, the terrific thunderings of the forts, and the still louder belchings of the fleet, the fire of floating rafts and discarded property, the smoke of wrecks and of cannon, the shrieks of the wounded, and the upturned faces of the dead, — all commingled to present in tragic majesty the multiplied horrors possible in war; but the victory was achieved, and the Union squadron road proudly upon the waters in front of New Orleans.

In the first flush of victory Farragut wrote home thus tenderly:

"Off New Orleans, Flag-Ship 'Hartford',
"April 25, 1862.

"My dearest Wife and Boy: I am so agitated that I can scarcely write, and shall only tell you that it has pleased Almighty God to preserve my life through a fire such as the world has scarcely known. I shall return properly my thanks, as well as those of our fleet, for His goodness and mercy. He has permitted me to make a name for my dear boy's inheritance, as well as for my comfort and that of my family. We lost about thirty killed and ninety wounded. I lost no officers. . . . All the officers did their duty to my admiration, which I shall notice at a more convenient season. I have only time to thank God and bless you both. Give my love to the family and all the neighbors.

"D. G. F."

He appointed eleven o'clock on the following morning (the 26th) as the hour "for all the officers and crews to return thanks to Almighty God for His great goodness in permitting them to pass through the events of the last two days with so little loss of life and blood."

Time and your patience will alike compel me to pass over the attack upon Vicksburg, Port Hudson, and the rest, each of which in its chivalric incidents was sufficient to establish the skill and intrepidity of any commander of any age; but the main points of our hero's story would be incomplete without a few words about Mobile, the last of the Confederate maritime strongholds to be captured.

Next to New Orleans, Mobile was the most important sea-port of the Confederacy, and under the pressure of war became well-nigh indispensable to its continuance. Its reduction was, therefore, a matter of prime importance to the Union cause. The Confederates

naturally concentrated their utmost resources for its defence, in which they were aided by their war experience and in timely preparation after it was known that an attack by the Union forces was probable. While fewer problems for its capture were presented for solution than at New Orleans, perhaps even greater practical skill and leadership were necessary; for this leadership both the Government and the people looked to Farragut; not that he was the only officer in the service competent to manage an intricate and perilous expedition, but because there was a general impression that, in some mysterious way, he reached victory everywhere, and was well-nigh invincible.

It will be remembered that the Bay of Mobile, at the head of which the city is located, makes up into the land about thirty miles from the Gulf of Mexico, and the navigation is difficult, owing to shoals and islands in the shape of natural obstacles; and upon the right approach, on what is called Mobile Point, was a formidable fortification, Fort Morgan, mounting eighty-six guns of various calibre, and on the left approach, on Dauphin Island, was Fort Gaines, another, though not equally formidable fort. In front of Dauphin Island was a far-reaching shoal, rendering the draft of water so shallow as to crowd all passing vessels near to Fort Morgan. The Confederates had also constructed a formidable iron-clad ram — the "Tennessee" — and had planted the bay in the vicinity of the forts with torpedoes, in the hope and belief that if Farragut's fleet should escape the fire of the forts, it would be destroyed by the torpedoes in any attempt made to approach the city. Farragut's fleet consisted of nineteen vessels, including four iron-clads, two of which were built for river service on the Mississippi. There was the usual

almost inevitable delay in getting the squadron together and ready for action, during which there were also the customary fluctuations of hope and fear. To Farragut, especially, the engagement would be fraught with immeasurable consequences; for with his reputation for success, failure from whatever cause could hardly have saved his fame, while success in this additional instance could add little to it, because he would simply do what was almost universally expected. He was also very much worn out with long service and anxiety; but the moral grandeur as well as the physical importance of the occasion took possession of him, and his splendid abilities again rose to the emergency, and he was once more the same grand sea king that will inhabit the imagination of men in all coming time. As at New Orleans, the capture of Mobile and of the forts was to be made by the coöperation of the land forces with the navy. At Mobile no attempt was seriously to be made to reduce the forts by the gun-boats, but the purpose was to run by them, and by getting between them and the city, cut off supplies and make their surrender inevitable.

At about half-past five o'clock on the morning of the 5th of August (1864), having learned that the wind was in the right quarter, the Admiral said to Captain Percival Drayton, who commanded the "Hartford," while still sipping his tea at breakfast, "Well, Drayton, we might as well get under way." The signal for which all the vessels were waiting was given, and the ships were arranged in pairs, side by side, the "Metacomet," Lieut.-Commander James E. Jouett, being lashed to the "Hartford;" the monitors were standing down from Sand Island, the flag-ship crossed the bar, and all the vessels hoisted the United States flag at the peak

and masthead as well, and it was evident that the squadron "meant business." The "Tecumseh" led the iron-clads, and the "Brooklyn" the wooden ships, Farragut having yielded his purpose to lead with the "Hartford" to the persuasion of his officers, who did not wish him to be exposed to so great peril as the leadership would involve, and the "Hartford" took the second place. While the monitors were taking their stations, the "Tecumseh," which led the column, fired two shots at the fort, and the order of battle being now fully formed, the fleet went ahead. Fort Morgan soon opened fire upon the "Brooklyn," which at once replied with her bow guns, followed very soon by those of the fighting column of wooden ships. "In the midst of the vigorous cannonade, in order to see more clearly, Farragut climbed up and took his position in the port main rigging. As the smoke increased, Farragut went up step by step until he was close under the maintop." Here he was near the pilot, who had been sent aloft, and the whole scene of battle spread out under his eyes; but Captain Drayton, being alarmed lest he might be thrown to the deck or into the sea, sent a seaman up to lash the Admiral to the rigging.

"Shortly after the monitors and the bow guns of the fleet began firing," says Captain Mahan, "the enemy's gunboats and the iron-clad 'Tennessee' moved out from behind Fort Morgan and took an enfilading position." The two columns of iron-clads, and the wooden ships lashed together in pairs, as before stated, were soon approaching the line of torpedoes and the narrow channel of safety. "All promised fairly, provided the leaders of the two columns pushed rapidly and unhesitatingly in the direction assigned them. But almost at the same moment doubt seized the leaders and led

to a double disaster" ; namely, the loss of the "Tecumseh" and the confusion of the fleet. A signal was soon made to the "Brooklyn" to "go ahead," but her commander probably misunderstood the signal, or "perhaps between his orders to pass east of the buoy and the difficulty of doing so, owing to the position into which his own vessel and the monitors had fallen," remained motionless. It was a moment of supreme anxiety, and Farragut, as he afterwards said, solemnly appealed to Heaven, saying, "O God, who created man and gave him reason, direct me what to do! Shall I go on?" "And it seemed," said the Admiral, "as if in answer, a voice commanded, 'Go on.'" Quick as a flash Farragut obeyed what he interpreted as the Divine direction and moved forward; as he passed a hesitating ship of the squadron, a warning cry came from her of "torpedoes ahead." "Damn the torpedoes!" shouted the Admiral in a transport of excitement, and elated by his dauntless purpose. "Four bells, Captain Drayton. Go ahead, Jouett, full speed!" And on he went where death was most threatening and danger most appalling. "As they passed the buoys the rubbing of the cases of the torpedoes was heard against the bottom of the ship and many of the primers snapped audibly, but no torpedo exploded," and again it was marvellously said that Farragut had a "charmed life."

It is not expedient to follow the incidents of the battle any farther, nor to tell in detail of the gallant bearing and action of the officers of all the wooden ships and monitors, nor of the subsequent engagement of the forts, the attack upon and mastery of the Confederate iron-clad "Tennessee," the wounding of Admiral Buchanan of the opposing fleet, and his early surrender.

Mobile was ours, and Farragut the greatest of naval heroes.

We need not abate one tittle of our gratitude and admiration for the soldiers of the Union Army, profuse as these have always been for their priceless services in saving the country from destruction, in order that we may give a like offering of praise and thankfulness to the officers and sailors who so magnificently coöperated in this work of patriotism and gallantry. Neither need we fear that any noble-minded soldier would have us withhold our enthusiastic devotion to the navy. And I say without hesitation that a more heroic, faithful, and persistent body of men never carried muskets on the field nor trod the decks of a fighting squadron than those who in the past composed and in the present constitute, as I believe, the naval force of the United States. God bless them all for their fidelity and courage, and preserve in them and their successors these inestimable virtues!

It has been asked if Farragut was really a great man? Yes, great in his vocation, where most men show greatness if they have any. He had not the philosophy of Dr. Franklin, nor the statesmanship of Webster, nor the eloquence of Choate, nor the poetical graces of Longfellow; but neither had any one of these the qualities of all the others; but Farragut had some of the qualities of each, including a poetic fancy, and some qualities which neither of them possessed. As a strategist he had something of the quality that Emerson had as a poet — he was not only practical but mystical; he had keen and faultless sagacity, delicate intuitions, wonderful penetration, and great staying power; and, in the language of our day, the habit of "getting there." To the masses of people he was

a kind of nautical wizard; to them, at least, he had power

"To call spirits from the vasty deep,"

marshal them into battle on his side, and bid them penetrate the hidden channels of success until they should light, at last, with unerring certainty like eagles upon his victorious banners.

He was a man of well-defined and inflexible principles; a sense of duty was the governing power of his life. Of this inflexibility no further evidence need be given than his decision, at the opening of the Rebellion, to abide with the Union cause. It will be remembered that Farragut was a native of Tennessee, and that his domestic affiliations were even nearer with Virginia than with Tennessee. His residence was at Norfolk, where there was then as now a navy-yard, and many naval officers whose sympathies were then with "allegiance to the State" rather than to the nation. Daily gatherings where such sentiments were encouraged were held. In one such, on the morning of the day when it was announced that the ordinance of secession had been passed by the Virginia Convention, Farragut happening to be present, expressed freely his dissatisfaction at the action of the convention, and openly justified the course of President Lincoln in calling for troops after the seizure of the forts and arsenals. For this he was "impatiently informed," says his son, "that a person of his sentiments could not live in Norfolk;" to which he calmly replied, "Well, then I can live somewhere else." To his noble wife, herself a native of Norfolk, he said, "This act of mine may cause years of separation from your family, so you

must decide quickly whether you will go North or remain here." Her decision was immediate to accompany her husband.

He was a devout Christian, but not of the clamorous or demonstrative sort; he was always hopeful, generous, trustful, and self-reliant. I think he counted himself in a large degree a man of destiny; he dared on his own account, but felt safest when he had hold of the hand of the Almighty. As a man he was dignified and self-possessed; proud of the services rendered to his country and heartily enjoyed their recital; but he was the very incarnation of modesty, and quailed like a timid maiden before superfluous praise and adulation. There was not the slighest condescension in his bearing; he had nothing of the austere mannerism of men who are great (or think they are) in little things; but all his intercourse was frank, cordial, and sincere. There was also a vein of humor in his composition which enabled him to draw amusement from observing the foibles of men and from the incidents of society. At one time while a guest at my house, the serving-man at table was about to fill his glass with water, when the Admiral quietly passed his hand over the top of it and playfully remarked, "None of that inside of me to-day, if you please, though I usually like about three or four fathoms under my keel."

There is something supremely interesting in the love of a sailor for his ship. It is not unlike the attachment of an enamored groom for his bride; there is in it an absorption for the time being of the whole power of the soul, and an intense impression of personality, as if the ship were a living thing and conscious of every sentiment of her commander.

Farragut was no exception to this rule. During the progress of the Rebellion vast changes and improvements were made in the construction and equipment of naval vessels, including monitors, iron-clads, etc.; yet in a conversation with the Admiral after the war was over, I asked him what kind of a war-ship he would build after all his experience. He waited for a moment and then said, "She would be very like the 'Hartford,' sir." The "Hartford," you will remember, was his old flag-ship, in which he had suffered his greatest perils and won his most conspicuous victories.

In the same conversation I asked him, "What did you expect when you entered Mobile Bay?" He instantly replied, "To take the place, of course."— "Yes," said I, "but why 'of course'? To common observers the chances, if not even, would seem to have been against you. The Confederates had about as strong a naval force as you had and an equal variety of vessels; besides, they had planted the Bay with torpedoes and had two coöperating forts; and the ordinary estimate has been that one gun in position on land is equal to four of like calibre afloat; and you yourself have given to Admiral Buchanan credit for high naval skill and ability; therefore the 'of course' does not seem to me apparent. Do you mean," I continued, "that you had a clearly defined plan the working out of which would give you victory?" He waited a moment before replying, and then said, "Well, I never go into a battle without a well settled plan, and I am never so wedded to my plan that I cannot abandon it at any moment when I find the circumstances different from what I anticipated." This, I think, was very charac-

teristic of him; and I have been told by naval men that this was probably the grand secret of his success in Mobile Bay. His opponent, Admiral Buchanan, was not wanting in bravery and was well versed in naval tactics. He had probably anticipated Farragut's plan up to the time of the sinking of the "Tecumseh;" but then Farragut abandoned his plan, threw his opponent into confusion, and by "dealing with the circumstances as he found them," snatched victory from impending defeat before the astonished eyes of both friends and foes.

I have been reminded by the Hon. F. W. Lincoln, then Mayor of Boston, that Admiral Farragut visited this city in 1865, when he stated that he had not been here before for forty years, but that he then sailed from our navy-yard a young officer. He participated in the Fourth of July celebration of 1865 in Boston, was present at the oration, was in the procession to Faneuil Hall, made a speech at the dinner, and afterwards held a reception in the same hall, where thousands of citizens took him by the hand. He was also entertained at dinner at the Union Club, and received numerous hospitalities at the hands of the Mayor and of eminent citizens. He also had an excursion down the Harbor, visited Fort Warren and other notable places, and was everywhere enthusiastically received with the honors due to his rank and fame. Our distinguished Dr. Oliver Wendell Homes, poet-laureate by popular designation if not by royal appointment, saluted him with an appropriate poem, which was published in the "Transcript" of August 1, 1865.

Admiral Lessoffsky, commander of a Russian fleet which came here the year before, often expressed his admiration for Farragut, who, he delighted to say, was

one of the greatest naval commanders the world has ever seen; and that this sentiment has not died out in the great northern empire, is shown by the visit to the Admiral's tomb, at Woodlawn Cemetery, by the officers of the Russian fleet which visited the harbor of New York a month ago, and by the touching eulogy there made by its commander. All of which is reënforced by the Russian ships here present and speaking for themselves to-day.

And now, fellow-citizens, while the story is but half told, and that imperfectly, the moment has arrived when words no longer have potential significance. Unveil the statue, and let the bronze lips forevermore accentuate his fame!

Army of the Potomac, Grand Army of the Republic, soldiers, sailors, marines, veterans, guests, whoever may be present, thrice welcome all; let us give a thousand cheers for the artist who has so happily caught the pose and delineated the features of the famous original! Ten thousand more for the great Sea King himself! Wave around him the flag of the country he loved so much! Let these salvos of artillery be to our ears the echoes of his thundering squadrons! And while chiming bells and martial strains fill the air with melody, let all our hearts renew their tributes of admiration, affection, and gratitude to the peerless Admiral, the incorruptible patriot, the altogether noble man.

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